

Sustainable Greenfield Implementation Committee (SGIC)

Thursday 6/24/2021, 5:00-6:30pm - Minutes

Attending: Nancy Hazard, George Touloumtzis, Carole Collins, Phil Elmer, Marlo Warner, Jacob Frank, MJ Adams, Tara Kurland, Hannah Rechtschaffen, Mike Pattavina **Absent:** Jay Lord **Clerk:** Laurie DiDonato **Community Development Administrator:** Lindsay Rowe **Members of Public:** Ginny Desorgher, Robert Williford, Susan Worgaftik,

5:04 pm George called meeting to order

Introductions/Updates

- **George Touloumtzis**, Planning Board Rep – New flashing lights at crosswalk are great!
- **Hannah Rechtschaffen**, At Large member, and SGIC chair –excited about being invited to serve on committee writing grant for GCC Downtown efforts
- **Jacob Frank**, Youth representative, GHS senior – GHS Env. Club has launched a Cooler Communities web site that supports moving Greenfield off fossil fuels. Check it out <https://community.massenergize.org/GreenfieldMA> and pledge.
- **Nancy Hazard**, At Large member – Court Square pilot project & Cooler Communities, and StileFx, new Hip Hop dance studio for youth opened!
- **Mike Pattavina**, At Large member – Appreciating spring and people outside planting!
- **Susan Worgaftik**, guest from Greening Greenfield and FCCPR - Greenfield is beginning to address its housing challenges.
- **Marlo Warner**, DPW director, fills DPW seat – Wisdom Way ready to go out to bid – 130 trees planted this spring, and DPW has figured out how to get them watered.
- **Carole Collins**, Director, Energy & Sustainability – Library has gone out to bid, plan to break ground in August. ALL the energy-related features that she advocated for have been included, including PV!
- **Phil Elmer**, City Council representative – He is advocating for port-a-potties around town to address the problem that the garage is being used as a ‘toilet.’
- **MJ Adams**, Director Community & Economic Development- Court Square being closed off for pilot project. – LLRP about to be completed.
- **Lindsay Rowe**, guest, Comm. Dvlpmt. Admin – Court Square project moving forward!
- **Laurie DiDonato**, Energy & Sustainability assistant – She is back working in Town Hall office and spending time downtown at lunchtime – seeing lots of “cool stuff!”
- **Ginny Desorgher**, Town Council member guest – member of Economic Dev’t Committee, has been visiting a lot of Downtown businesses and wants to learn more about LLRP.
- **Robert Wilford**, guest, Committee on Disability Access. Interested in downtown plans.

Approval of April 22nd Meeting Minutes- Phil made a motion to accept the minutes. Motion was seconded by MJ. George had a minor edit at the top of page 2: instead of ‘protective of farmland’, change to ‘balance the protection of farmland while supporting economic development’. The motion passed with Jacob abstaining.

Mike Pattavina farewell- Mike is leaving the committee but will remain on the MRF advisory board. Many committee members expressed appreciation and thanks for Mike’s contributions and enthusiasm.

Local Rapid Recovery Project (LRRP) update- MJ presented the top 12 priorities that were developed through this project and asked for input from the committee. Refer to handout for specifics. There was mostly positive feedback on the priorities chosen:

1. Court Square plaza – temporary pilot implementation is underway. There were some concerns about traffic flow and accessibility.

2. Marketing initiative for downtown including website upgrade – the Mayor wants to do a marketing plan in conjunction with the GBA and Chamber of Commerce. Many felt this was a high priority but felt there should be a targeted outreach including those in the digital economy.
3. First National Bank building RFP- Barriers for the city to develop this building include financial feasibility and the absence of a loading dock at the back side. One suggestion was to use it as a temporary homeless shelter, but safety is an issue, it is not earthquake safe. Most people felt this was an important step to take.
4. Complete pocket park at Fiske Avenue – All agreed on the importance of this and much is already in progress. There was clarification from Carole and Marlo on why fewer trees were planted on the wall, which was mainly due to concerns about the infrastructure limitations and tree survival.
5. Use of Urban Center Housing-Tax Increment Financing to encourage development on upper stories in the downtown. This was popular due to increased housing need but should be paired with accessibility.
6. Develop parking benefit district: revenues from parking downtown will be used to manage downtown programs and projects. People felt it is a wonderful way to re-frame paying for parking. Many felt this should be managed by an existing organization. Getting access to parking revenue still being explored.
7. Business directory/ info kiosk to display info – Most felt this was a good idea but not top priority.
8. 100% corner demonstration project at Federal and Bank Row – There was a suggestion that a traffic circle be considered. Otherwise this was strongly supported.
9. Storefront signage improvement program – Carole and others strongly support design guidelines, and sign improvements can have a big impact on the appeal of downtown for low cost.
10. Implement wayfinding signage to get around downtown. - All agreed it would be great to have some uniformity and more information available.
11. More streetscape elements to complement Main Street project (curb to curb). There was support for this, with comments on the need for awning improvements and possible replacement of the pink bricks.
12. Sign bylaw/ordinance/guidelines should be updated- there was strong agreement that we make sure we are not limiting business owners and that they can use the most effective signs.

Energy updates from Carole:

- The Energy Department tracks savings the City has realized as a result of energy projects and the savings have reached approximately 4.5 million dollars.
- The bids have come back on the construction of the new library, and all the recommendations related to achieving net zero/ready will be included.
- The new climate bill from the State indicates many great things happening on the energy front, including a new net zero building stretch code coming soon. Luckily, we are already heading in that direction with the library and Fire station, but need to be prepared for these changes. Because it is a stretch code, each community will need to decide to adopt it. In addition, contractor training and landlord education will be a big part of its implementation.

Mining master plan – Laurie discussed her progress on mining the Master Plan for straightforward implementation actions. She has expanded a list of actions and has taken some steps to determine what work has already been done. Many are zoning-related, so the Planning Department provided a status update for these items. Next steps include further status updates, clarifying how actions fit into Master plan goals, and looking into steps to implementation. As many of these actions are zoning-related, it has been suggested that learning more about form-based code may be one route to take. A first step in this direction might include a presentation from the Planning Department or other Form-based Code expert.

Remote vs. in-person meetings- The Mayor prefers in-person meetings, so it was decided that our next meeting would be in-person, even though some members preferred virtual. Carole suggested we consider shifting the meeting time back to a 4:30pm, which seemed acceptable for all. Next meeting is July 22nd, 4:30 pm-6pm, City Hall 2nd Floor meeting room.

Phil made a motion to adjourn, and Carole seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 6:33pm.